L58/2/1989

FOLLOWING

LEWIS AND CLARK

ACROSS THE

CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST

A13.13:

This folder provides a brief historical overview of the Lewis and Clark Expedition as it passed westward in 1805 and then eastward in 1806 through what is now the Clearwater National Forest. The general route used by Lewis and Clark and their company was established by Indians who used this as one of their trails east across the Bitterroots to hunting country. The trail was then used for many years after the Lewis and Clark Expedition by Indians, trappers and others.

Today the original trail is not intact. It is therefore not possible to hike or ride a horse from one end of the trail to the other over a maintained route. In fact, the exact location of some portions of the trail is not known today.

The Lolo Motorway (Forest Road #500) was constructed in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) on or adjacent to much of the original trail. The road provides access to points where it is possible to see and hike remnants of the original trail. The map in this folder shows the relationship of the original trail to the Lolo Motorway and to some of the other roads and trails in the area.

The trail area is normally snowbound and inaccessible between early October and late July. Specific information about road and trail conditions and about the Lewis and Clark Trail itself is available from the Lolo Pass Visitor Center along U.S. 12 atop the Bitterroots or from nearby ranger stations. Complete forest maps and other visitor information are available.

PHEASANT CAMP September 21, 1805, Lewis's party left the camp on the ridge between Dollar and Sixbits Creeks and made their way to Lolo Creek. Here they "...encamped on a small open bottom where there was tolerable food for our horses." After making camp, they "...killed a few pheasants,...a prairie wolf which together with the balance of our horse beef and some crawfish which we obtained in the creek enabled us to make one more hearty meal, not knowing where the next was to be found."

LEWIS AND CLARK GROVE Clark camped here September 19, 1805, on the journey West. Captain Clark, with six hunters, traveled from the mouth of Doubt Creek on Hungery Creek to Cedar Creek in one day. They came 22 miles on a direct course, but according to Clark"...passed over a mountain, and the heads of a branch of hungary Creek, two high mountains, ridges, and through much falling timber (which caused our road of the day to be double the direct distance on the Course...."

SMALL PRARIE CAMP On the morning of June 15, 1806, they set out from Weippe in a hard rain. After covering about 11 miles, they caught up to two members of the party who had gone ahead to hunt and had killed a deer. Lewis wrote, "we halted at the creek, dined and graized our horses....after dinner we proceeded up the creek...and incamped near a small prarie in the bottom land. The fallen timber in addition to the slippery roads made our march slow and extreemly laborious on our horses."

"SALMON TROUT" CAMP On the morning of June 18, 1806, Lewis and Clark retreated from Hungery Creek. As described in Lewis's journal, "we hope by means of fish together with what deer and bear we can kill to be enabled to subsist untill our guide arrives without the necessity of returning to the quawmash flats." (Weippe Prairie) "there is a great abundance of good food here to sustain our horses." They camped here June 18 through June 20, 1806, and again on June 24, 1806.

FULL STOMACH CAMP Captain Lewis and his men camped here September 20, 1805. Following several days of extremely difficult travel with little food, the men bedded down this night with full stomachs. In his journal entry Lewis describes "...a grey free stone appearing in large masses above the earth..." and "...huckleberries, honeysuckle and alder ...also a kind of honeysuckle which bears a white bury."

HEARTY MEAL STOP Lewis and his party stopped here to eat at about 1 p.m. on September 20, 1805. Earlier in the day, they had come upon a horse which had been killed and butchered the day before by Clark who, with six men, had gone ahead of the main party. Lewis wrote, "...we halted on a small branch runing to the leit and made a hearty meal on our horse beel to the comfort of our stomachs."

PORTABLE SOUP CAMP Captain Lewis, with the main party, was following Captain Clark. The party traveled 18 miles, September 19, 1805, and had "...only a small quantity of portable soup...." for supper. The men were showing the effects of the lack of food and exhaustion. Several were"...unwell with the disentary, breaking out, or irruptions of the skin." Portable soup was dehydrated, powdered soup Lewis developed.

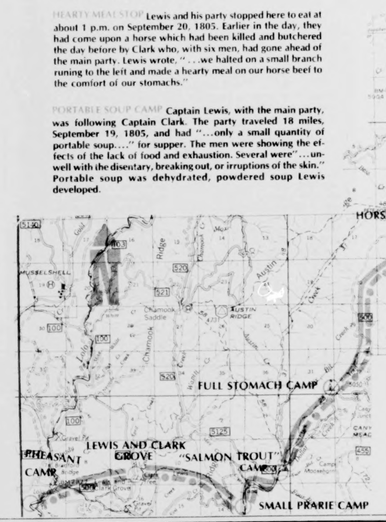
HORSE STEAK MEADOW The party set out early the morning of June 16, 1806, retracing the route of the previous September. Progress was slow because of fallen timber and snow. They made 15 miles by evening, but decided against proceeding further due to the anticipated lack of food for the horses. Captain Lewis describes it: "we arrived early in the evening at the place that Capt. C. had killed and left the flesh of a horse for us last September."

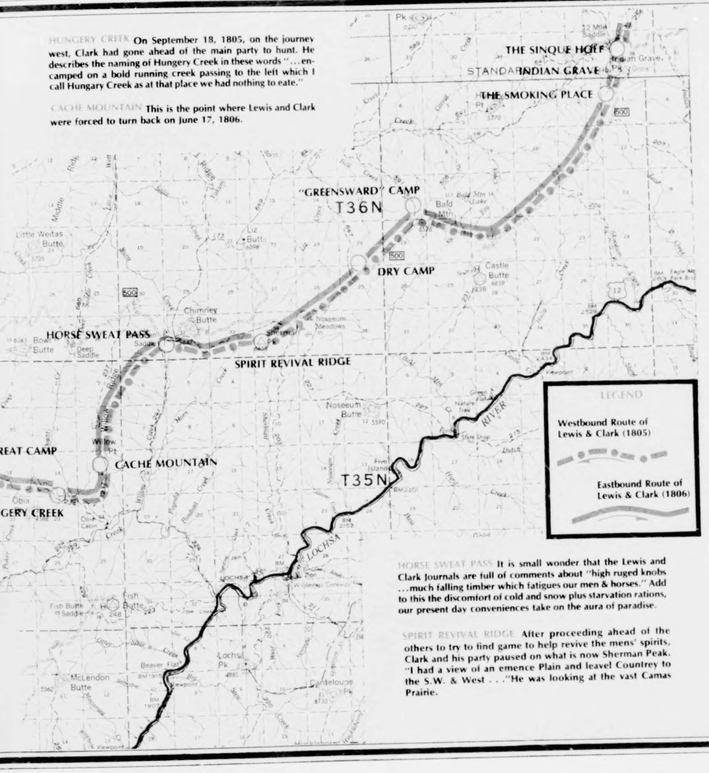
JERUSALEM ARTICHOKES CAMPSITE Lewis and Clark camped here June 25, 1806 on their second attempt to cross the mountains on the journey east. Lewis wrote: "...at this place I met with a plant the root of which the shoshones eat. It is a small knob root a good deel in flavor an consistency like the Jerusalem Artichoke...after dinner we continued our rout to hungary Creek and encamped about one and a half miles below our encampment of the 16th (September 16, 1805)."

RETREAT CAMP The first attempt by Lewis and Clark in June 1806, to cross the Bitterroot Mountains from west to east was made without guides. On June 17, 1806, they went as far as Cache Mountain and found snow 10 feet deep. They decided to send for Indian guides and moved back to Hungery Creek on the evening of June 17, 1806, and camped. Captain Lewis: "The party were a good deel dejected tho not much so as I had apprehanded they would have been. This is the first time since we have been on this long tour that we have ever been compelled to retreat or make a retrograde march."

HUNGERY CREEK On September 18, 1805, on the journey west, Clark had gone ahead of the main party to hunt. He describes the naming of Hungery Creek in these words "...encamped on a bold running creek passing to the left which I call Hungary Creek as at that place we had nothing to eate."

CACHE MOUNTAIN This is the point where Lewis and Clark were forced to turn back on June 17, 1806.





HORSE SWEAT PASS It is small wonder that the Lewis and Clark Journals are full of comments about "high ruged knobs ...much falling timber which fatigues our men & horses." Add to this the discomfort of cold and snow plus starvation rations, our present day conveniences take on the aura of paradise.

SPIRIT REVIVAL RIDGE After proceeding ahead of the others to try to find game to help revive the mens' spirits, Clark and his party paused on what is now Sherman Peak. "I had a view of an emence Plain and leavel Countrey to the S.W. & West . . ."He was looking at the vast Camas Prairie.

DRY CAMP On the morning of September 18, 1805, on the journey west, the party split, Clark moving on ahead with six hunters. Lewis followed with the main party and the heavier equipment and supplies. After making 18 miles that day, Captain Lewis made a dry camp on the sidehill below, procuring water with difficulty from a steep ravine. According to the Journal kept by Lewis, "....we dined and suped on a skant proportion of portable soupe, a few canesters of which, a little bears oil and about 20 lb. of candles from our stock of provision."

"GREENSWARD" CAMP The party set out early from Hungery Creek on the morning of June 26, 1806, retracing the route abandoned because of deep snows and the lack of Indian guides. Lewis wrote: "late in the evening much to the satisfaction of ourselves and the comfort of our horses we arrived at the desired spot and encamped on the steep side of a mountain convenient to a good spring. there we found a abundance of fine grass for our horses, the grass was young and tender of course and had much the appearance of greenward."

THE SMOKING PLACE On the journey east June 27, 1806, the Nez Perce guides requested that the party halt at a rock cairn where they smoked a pipe. This cairn is described as being one mile short of the camp of September 17, 1805, which is now known as the Sinque Hole Camp. Clark described the view confronting the party: "from this place we had an extensive view of these Stupendous mountains principaliy covered with snow like that on which we stood; we were entirely serounded by those mountains from which to one unaquainted with them it would have seemed impossible ever to have escaped...."

INDIAN GRAVE The burial place of a 14-year-old Indian boy who died here in 1895.

THE SINQUE HOLE derives its name from the description of Pvt. Whitehouse a member of the party: "camped at a small branch on the mountain near a round sinque hole full of water." This was the camp of September 17, 1805, on the westward journey. According to Clark, "we encamped on the top of a high knob of the mountain at a run passing to the left." The combination of these descriptions fits this sinkhole location perfectly.

SADDLE CAMP ROAD This is a good road connection to the Lewis and Clark Highway. Logging trucks may be encountered.

THE DEVIL'S CHAIR is an interesting rock formation. If you climb on top, the impression of a big, overstuffed armchair is apparent. Some people are tempted to jump across the gap in front of the main rock to a slab several feet away. We don't advise it because the jump back is not so easy. Leave this feat to the mountain goats you may see here or in the vicinity of Squaw Creek.

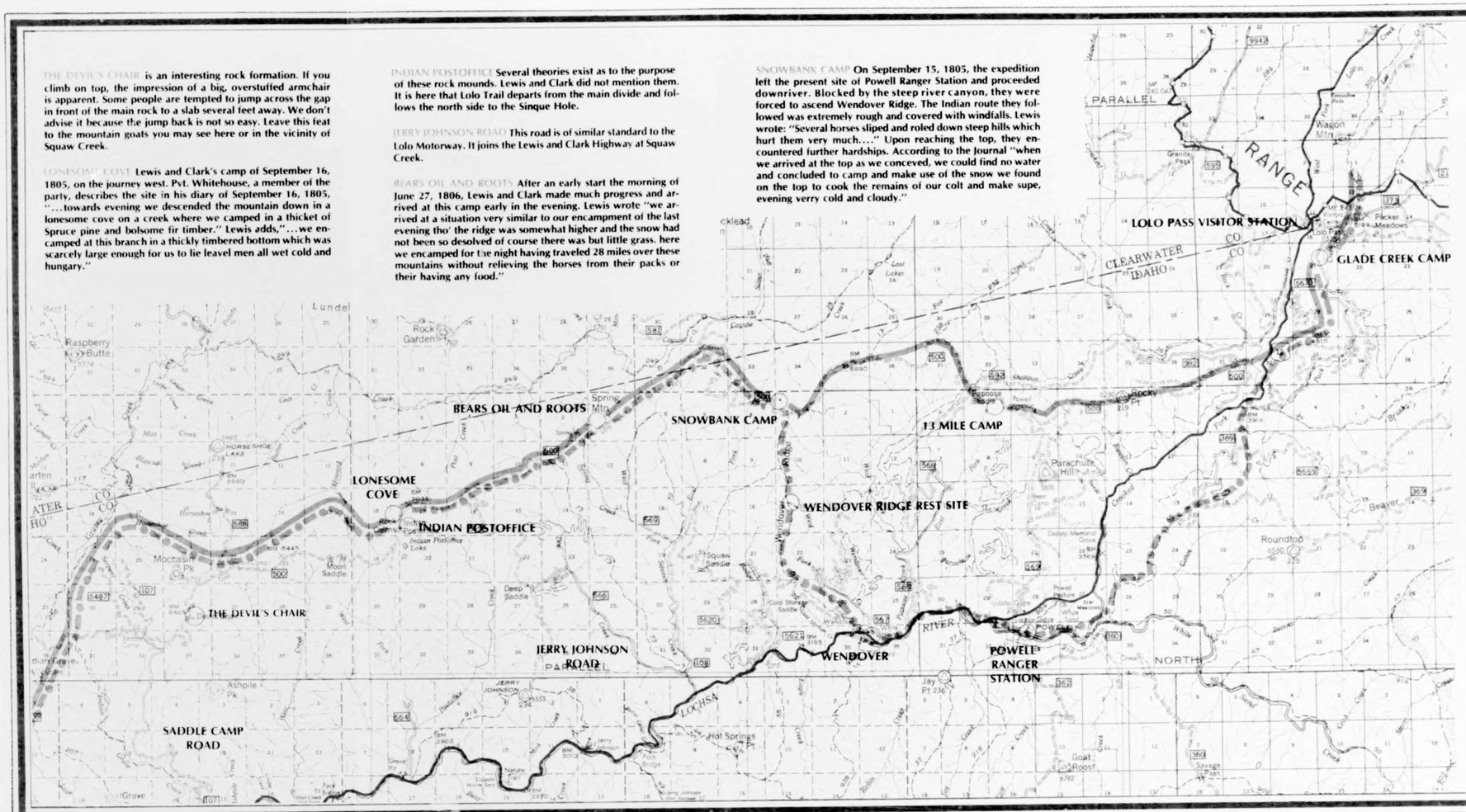
LONESOME COVE Lewis and Clark's camp of September 16, 1805, on the journey west. Pvt. Whitehouse, a member of the party, describes the site in his diary of September 16, 1805, "...towards evening we descended the mountain down in a lonesome cove on a creek where we camped in a thicket of Spruce pine and bolsome fir timber." Lewis adds,"...we encamped at this branch in a thickly timbered bottom which was scarcely large enough for us to lie leavel men all wet cold and hungary."

INDIAN POSTOFFICE Several theories exist as to the purpose of these rock mounds. Lewis and Clark did not mention them. It is here that Lolo Trail departs from the main divide and follows the north side to the Sinque Hole.

JERRY JOHNSON ROAD This road is of similar standard to the Lolo Motorway. It joins the Lewis and Clark Highway at Squaw Creek.

BEARS OIL AND ROOTS After an early start the morning of June 27, 1806, Lewis and Clark made much progress and arrived at this camp early in the evening. Lewis wrote "we arrived at a situation very similar to our encampment of the last evening tho' the ridge was somewhat higher and the snow had not been so desolved of course there was but little grass. here we encamped for the night having traveled 28 miles over these mountains without relieving the horses from their packs or their having any food."

SNOWBANK CAMP On September 15, 1805, the expedition left the present site of Powell Ranger Station and proceeded downriver. Blocked by the steep river canyon, they were forced to ascend Wendover Ridge. The Indian route they followed was extremely rough and covered with windfalls. Lewis wrote: "Several horses sliped and roled down steep hills which hurt them very much...." Upon reaching the top, they encountered further hardships. According to the Journal "when we arrived at the top as we conceved, we could find no water and concluded to camp and make use of the snow we found on the top to cook the remains of our colt and make supe, evening verry cold and cloudy."



13 MILE CAMP Lewis and Clark camped here June 28, 1806. Although they were able to make good time traveling on the snow, progress for the day was limited by lack of feed for the horses. Lewis wrote: "about eleven o'clock we arrived at an untimbered side of a mountain with a Southern aspect...here we found an abundance of grass for our horses as the Indians had informed us. As our horses were very hungary and much fatiegued and from information no other place where we could obtain grass for them within the reach of this evenings travel we determined to remain at this place all night having come 13 miles only...the whole of the rout of this day was over deep snows. we find the traveling on the snow not worse than without it, as the easy passage it gives us over rocks and fallen timber fully compensate for the inconvenience of sliping, certain it is that we travel considerable faster on the snow than without it."

WENDOVER RIDGE REST SITE On September 15, 1805, the party rested for two hours here, waiting for those at the rear to catch up. "the timber has been burnt and lies in every direction...."

WENDOVER Continuing down river from their camp of September 14, 1805, at Powell Ranger Station, the expedition proceeded "over steep points rockey and buschey as usial for 4 miles to an old Indian fishing place." This site is the small meadow within the Wendover Campground. Unable to travel further, they climbed the ridge to the north and finally returned to the Lolo Trail at Snow Bank Camp.

POWELL RANGER STATION The sign at the station describes the hardships which were starting to beset the party. They were only 2 days away from the relatively easy terrain and abundant game on Lolo Creek but were already experiencing fatigue and hunger. September 14, 1805, could very well have been a deciding date in the future of this country, if less determined men had been involved. The small island documented in their journals is located near the fuel supply area at the station. The "branch on the right side of the river" is the small stream flowing between the cookhouse and the bunkhouses.

GLADE CREEK CAMP Lewis and Clark camped here on September 13, 1805. The site is at the lower end of the string of openings associated with Packer Meadow. A small side spring supplied water.
It is interesting to note that most Indian encampments were near small streams or springs where possible. In interviews with the old Indians, Ralph Space, retired Supervisor of the Clearwater National Forest, reports that they frequently mentioned that drinking from large streams or rivers often caused bellyaches.

LOLO PASS VISITOR STATION (Open from June 15 to Labor Day, 7 days a week from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.) We hope that your tour across the Clearwater National Forest has been enjoyable. The welcome mat is always out. Come again.

* U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1989 — 694-127